

The idea that people, you could raise two high-powered rifles, so to speak, farther apart than Los Angeles and New York, and shoot at a point toward the center of the country, and those two high-powered rifle bullets would hit precisely together at a point over the Midwest, is an extraordinary thing. It is something that many people thought was impossible.

So I think it is entirely appropriate for the full House, on both sides of the aisle, regardless of what your position is on the ABM treaty or missile defense, to commend the wondrous efforts of the men and women of our uniformed services, and also all the folks working in business to make this thing work, all the contractor personnel who made it go.

Secondly, I think we have to acknowledge we have got a long road ahead in this program. As our resolution states, we are going to have lots of successes; we are going to have lots of failures. I am reminded that with Polaris, the Polaris tests numbered over 120, and it failed more than 50 percent of the time. The first time we put up surveillance satellite capability, our first 11 launches failed before we succeeded. Yet that was a very important capability to achieve.

So you have to have lots of failures. In fact, if you test rigorously, if you make these tests as difficult as you possibly can, while still learning a lot, you are going to have failures. I think we will have failures in the future, just as we are going to have failures with our other theater missile defense systems. But, nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, we have proven that not only can you hit a bullet with a bullet, but you can hit something going three times as fast as a bullet with an interceptor going three times as fast as a bullet, and that is truly extraordinary.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good day for America. It is a great milestone in this missile defense program that we have. We have a lot of hard work ahead. We have got lots of challenges, these tests will get tougher and tougher; and in the future, of course, we will have failures as well as successes.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to join the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) in support of this bill, as a cosponsor of the bill, as well as the floor manager for the bill on our side of the aisle.

The road to Saturday's successful intercept has been long and arduous; and we have miles to go before we can say we have gotten there, even gotten to the point where we have what we call a limited defense system capable of defending us against rogue missile attacks, simple rogue missile attacks, or perhaps unauthorized or accidental strike. We have a long way to go, and we should not let the euphoria of this moment obscure that fundamental fact.

Indeed, if we have learned anything since March 23, 1983, when Mr. Reagan made his speech and proposed what became the Strategic Defense Initiative, it is that missile defense is not likely, unfortunately, to make nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete. It may enhance deterrence, but it is unlikely to replace deterrence. That is a fundamental point.

Nevertheless, I think enhancing deterrence is a worthy goal. I think that if we can prove through testing, like the tests that we held Saturday night, rigorous testing, that gets more and more demanding and challenging with each test, that eventually takes on countermeasures as well, if we can prove after this kind of rigorous testing that we have a system worthy of deploying, that will give us limited protection against the kind of threat I just described, it is worth deploying; and I think it is worth observing what was accomplished Saturday night, because it moves us in that direction.

Let me emphasize that testing is critical. I have been a long-time supporter of that. We do not want to fool ourselves into thinking that we have got a system that can take on this daunting challenge when, in fact, it can easily be overcome or is not capable of what it is touted to be. We do not want to fool ourselves by deploying some kind of scarecrow system.

We associate ballistic missile defense with Mr. Reagan's speech on March 23, 1983; but in truth both administrations, the Clinton administration, the Reagan administration, the Bush administration, going all the way back to Lyndon Baines Johnson in 1967, have supported missile defense in one form or another.

Indeed, the safeguard system originated in 1967 with President Johnson's administration. It was taken to the point that it was deployed. The Spartan system failed a number of times. No one felt that it was a complete and good defense system; and after spending what would amount in today's money of about \$20 billion, we abandoned the system in North Dakota.

We kept spending money on ballistic missile defense in Democratic and Republican administrations. There were systems that have long been forgotten, like the BAMBI, which was a boost-phase interceptor, which was abandoned because it could not be proven to be invulnerable to counterattacks in fixed orbits in space.

Indeed, the path to Saturday night is littered with systems that simply could not meet the mettle. We have spent a lot of money, \$60 billion since 1983, to get where we have gotten; but we have had some successes, and I think it is right to take some time aside to savor those success.

I think the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) would agree we should not forget that this was not the first intercept with this system. Indeed, the first intercept occurred 2 years ago under the Clinton administration. This was a Clinton administra-

tion system. They in effect brought the technology to the point where it could be tested Saturday night and proven to work at least in those circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, when the test was concluded, General Kadish, who is doing a commendable job as the manager of this program, a very practical, pragmatic man, told everybody there, all the press there, when they asked him what should we deduce from the success we just had, he said if you just lower the level a little bit and let us proceed in a rigorous disinterested way, let us not get too excited about this thing, let us do our work, we think we can prove to you that we have got something worthy of deploying.

I think it is very, very fitting and very, very appropriate for us to rise today to commend the thousands of people who have made this a success.

While we are at it, I think we might commend a lot of other people in the so-called military-industrial complex, which is what we call them when we are usually disappointed, when we are usually confounded by the bills they present us, when we are usually suspicious of what they are up to.

When they succeed like Saturday night, we call them the arsenal of America. There are a lot of people out there are working in the arsenal of America making the F-22 meet its test every day. There are a lot of them working in other programs, like the THAAD, which was almost discarded. We gave it some extra money and another chance. They went out and made it work. They have just brought to fruition the PAC-3.

So there are successes, and we should commend them for their enormous technological capability, their perseverance and ability that brought us this far. I hope that this sort of bipartisan occasion today is an example of how we can treat ballistic missile defense in the future. It has been a political totem, frankly. I would like to see it treated like any other weapons system, the F-22, the C-17, you name it. If it meets the mettle, we go forward with it; but if it does not, it should be held to the same standards, truly with the same sort of rational examination and expectation we would any military system.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT).

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, leaders of China and Russia have just kissed, signed an agreement, and referred to Uncle Sam as an imperialist. China got our secrets from spies and from buying, with the help of Janet Reno. Russia got them from the FBI and Robert Hanssen. All of our enemies know our technology.

I was not an original supporter of the Star Wars initiative, but I am now. America cannot be defended by the neighborhood crime watch. When they took our spy plane, I do not know what